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The Week

“THE object of the special treaty with France which I now submit to you is to provide for immediate military assistance to France by the United States in case of any unprovoked movement of aggression against her by Germany without waiting for the advice of the Council of the League.” In other words, the Council of the League sitting at Geneva, practically on the Franco-German frontier, is not capable of deciding whether an “unprovoked aggression” has occurred. But what the League at Geneva is too near-sighted to recognize, Congress sitting nearly four thousand miles away, assisted by our notoriously efficient State Department and the utterly impartial news service that emanates from France, is to determine instantly. The fact is that this is not a “defensive” alliance and it is not aimed at “unprovoked aggression,” whatever they may be. It is an alliance. It pledges us to fight on France’s side in the next war, provided Germany is on the other. It pledges us, in fact, though not in theory, to support French diplomacy on the continent wherever it leads.

“I was moved to sign this treaty by considerations which will, I hope, seem as persuasive and as irresistible to you as they seemed to me.” The considerations seem to have been

the debt of Lafayette; but the persuasion was exercised by the irresistible Tiger on a man who was simply no match for him in force of character or integrity of mind. That is the real reason why Wilson was persuaded. Clemenceau, not Lafayette. Why not try a little candor for once?

RACE riots within a week of one another occurred in Washington and in Chicago. In Washington they were attributed to a much heralded “crime wave” and to “many assaults” by Negroes upon white women. The press made a race question of individual crime and the mob, led by marines and soldiers and sailors, took up the issue with which the press had presented them. Unoffending Negroes were dragged from street cars and beaten and were assaulted upon the streets. Mobs made repeated attempts to invade the colored residential district of the national capital. The police, during the first two nights of rioting—it is significant that the trouble began after dark each day—offered so little opposition that both white men and Negroes concluded the police were in sympathy with the lawless and improvised punitive expeditions which ranged the streets. A state of hysterical fear prevailed among the Negroes themselves, who distrusted the white police and the government armed forces sent to check the rioting. Their distrust was based on a common knowledge that the attacks were imminent, upon the absence of measures to prevent them, and upon the time which elapsed before the administration took steps to enforce order. With the advent of rain, troops and General Haan, mob violence subsided.

REPORTS from Chicago indicate that the riots there are due to an acute housing situation. In the past few months bombs have been exploded to intimidate Negro residents in white districts and real estate owners and landlords with Negro tenants. The press and the public realized that race relations were becoming increasingly strained in consequence of the large influx of Negroes from the South. Accommodations for Negroes within what had been the Negro district were proving inadequate. In addition, Negroes of means were moving into white residential sections. The expected clash finally occurred at an amusement resort, among bathers. In consequence of events in Washington and in Chicago, predictions are freely made that similar disturbances will occur throughout the country unless race bitterness is moderated. Negroes are becoming intolerant of the indignities to which they were subjected before the war. Among the remedies offered in the present disturbed conditions are restraint in newspaper reports of “crime

waves," and a realization that the Negro cannot be turned back to economic conditions from which he has been emancipating himself.

REPUBLICAN leaders in the Senate declare that neither Mr. Taft's letter nor Mr. Wilson's series of conferences has taken the edge off their party's determination to make reservations that will amount to amendments. In his conferences, the President seems to use an argument upon which papers like the *World* and *Times* rely. "I found Mr. Wilson afraid of action that would reopen negotiations," said Senator Spencer. "He is simply afraid that if the Senate does qualify the treaty in any way, complications will ensue . . . which would threaten the destruction of all the work done." Commerce with Germany, let us remember, is already revived. Does peace then mean the sealing and filing of a document—or the correction of injustices like the cession of Shantung which promise new wars? And in the latter case will American influence count for more if we are pledged, even "temporarily," to guarantee the bargain—or if we hold aloof until Europe has made a genuine bid for our support?

IT begins to look more and more as if the destiny of the Russian people would have to be worked out by Japan. Kolchak has lost Ufa, Perm and Ekaterinburg in quick succession. Into the American papers is beginning to creep a suspicion that his entire campaign was a press agency fake. In the South, of course, there is Denikin—commander of those Cossacks who have ridden roughshod over the Russian peasants—but a man now so popular with the people that the women of Kharkov (according to Dr. Harold Williams of the *Times*) press forward, "weeping with joy," to kiss the mud-guards of his machine. However, Denikin himself seems slowing up. What is left? Japan. Rumors come that new thousands of Japanese troops are entering Siberia. In their westward flow it is apparently to be America's small part to keep the railways open.

HOW great a factor Japan has become in the Russian situation is the subject of an article by Maurice Sokoloff in *L'Europe Nouvelle*. Sokoloff is a member of the Social-Revolutionaries of the Right, and an ex-deputy of that constituent assembly which the Bolsheviks dissolved. He has, therefore, all the qualifications of those anti-Bolshevik Russians who are supporting Kolchak in Mr. Sack's propaganda. But Sokoloff says: "It is plain that Kolchak can only succeed or even hold his own with the aid of armed foreign support. It is also clear that if Japan is to receive concessions a Japanese armed intervention on a vast scale in Siberia will be the quid pro quo. Even Allied capitalism-imperialism is beginning to realize that the brusque appearance of the yellow races, armed and in force, at the eastern door of Europe—a very insecure door indeed—is unsettling."

NO doubt the success of the Soviet armies will cause many Allied statesmen to consider in a new light the question of lifting the Russian blockade. When the Bolshevik troops drove Kolchak from Ekaterinburg they won for their government certain resources that will whet the appetite of Allied traders. Ekaterinburg is the pivotal point in the

rich Ural mining district. Chiefly in land that now lies behind the Bolshevik front are vast stores of coal and iron, gold—both in veins and placers—platinum mines with a yield three times as great as the rest of the world's in the days before the war, deposits of nickel, copper, zinc, mercury, silver, iridium, cobalt and asbestos. When American merchants rushed to trade with Germany the *New York Tribune* admitted that their action might seem "gross and ugly to the tender-minded." Still, the *Tribune* added philosophically, "business is quick and competitive." If the Soviet government remains in the Urals we may find this philosophical attitude of business coming again to the fore.

THE strike that has tied up industry in Berlin was the first test of strength between Majority Socialists and Independents since the signing of peace. Before the strike the Majority Socialists withdrew from the executive committee of the factory councils, the central representative organ of the Berlin workers, and called upon the industrial groups to repudiate the strike which the Independents had scheduled. Simultaneously the Minister of Defense forbade by martial law all manifestations of any kind. The Majority Socialists made their challenge entirely definite. They billeted more troops in Berlin. But despite their threats they lost the day. The workers followed the independents; Berlin had its general strike. For the industrial groups Bauer's government is already a fictitious power.

IT is not easy to tell how long the coal strikes in England which have called out a quarter of a million workers will remain "settled." The Miners' Federation accepted the new piece rates offered by the government, but there remain other grievances which will sooner or later be the subject of dispute. The government has made no start towards the nationalization of the mines which was recommended in the Sankey report. Neither has it granted the workers' demand for an expert inquiry into decreased output, which the miners assert is due less to reduction in hours or "slackening" on their own part than to the failure of the owners to provide necessary equipment. Dealing with an organized force of workers intent upon a "new social order" it is likely that the government's offer of better piece rates is at best only a temporary settlement.

THE speech with which Mr. Winston Churchill startled many English politicians a fortnight ago has now been published. Mr. Churchill spoke at a private dinner of members of Parliament, and no full copy of his address was given to the press. A new party had been formed, said some of the newspapers; Churchill spoke at the instigation of Lloyd George who wanted a Centre Coalition that would weaken Bonar Law's hand and strengthen his own. Other observers thought the chief aim of the meeting was to gain for Lloyd George a control over Unionist funds from which, as a theoretical member of the Liberal party, he is now excluded. The publication of Mr. Churchill's speech confirms neither of these stories. The purpose in a Centre Coalition, he said, was not a break with existing parties but an attempt to keep existing parties from breaking with each other. That is going to be no easy task.

THE Japanese Chargé d'Affaires emphatically and officially denies the existence of the Tri-Power agreement in respect to Asia which was described in last week's issue of *The New Republic*. We are glad to see it denied, and we respectfully suggest that the denial be filed with the Secretary General of the League of Nations for reference whenever it becomes necessary to discuss "regional understandings" under Article XXI. In the meantime, we trust that Mr. Kabsuki Debuchi will not feel aggrieved at the existence of the rumor. The alleged agreement differs in no respect from the secret agreement, entered into by his government in the early months of 1917. If he thinks the allegation of a secret bargain unfair to his government, what must he think of the existence of a secret bargain at the expense of an associate in the war?

WITH the initiation of inquiries into the Shipping Board and the Post Office Department Congress has now run its total of active investigations up to thirteen. This is a practically unprecedented number. Investigations are always popular in Congress. They give to members who would otherwise remain obscure a temporary power and prestige. But the present flood of investigations shows a genuine weakness in our system of government. It is further startling proof of the gulf existing between executive and legislature. Congress is investigating questions both of expenditure and policy. At all times it ought to hold a check on expenditure by means of a budget system—a check on policy through a more intimate responsibility of executives to Congress, either in person or through accredited representatives. Lacking both of these instruments, Congress blunders along with investigations which are sometimes worthless, often indirect and always behind the fact.

DESPITE the objection of its Democratic members a special committee now investigating the War Department has turned in to Congress a report which accuses Secretary Baker of playing deliberately into the hands of the packers. This charge is based on an alleged failure to dispose of food-stuffs after the Chief of Staff, on November 30th, had authorized the declaration of a surplus. In behalf of Mr. Baker one of the committee members declares that food supplies were in fact disposed of as rapidly as the taking of inventories would permit. War Department inventories are none too swift; but that there is animus in the charge made by the Republicans is shown in their statement—ridiculous in view of Mr. Baker's long service for the Consumers' League—that delay was "the result of a well-defined policy of the Secretary of War to withhold supplies from the domestic market and to protect the interests." It looks as if the Republicans on the committee were finding less material in their investigation than they had hoped to find.

THE testimony of Ambassador Fletcher before the Rules Committee of the House has not pleased the people who want to invade Mexico before our army is demobilized. Mr. Fletcher agreed that most of the Mexican newspapers were hostile to America, and that the government was better at promises of punishment for crimes against Americans

than at living up to those promises. But simply to withdraw support from Carranza would do no good, he thought: "at present I do not see any revolutionary leader in Mexico who has a sufficient following to attempt that sort of thing unaided." Moreover, Carranza is in control "of practically all of Mexican territory," and his government is "fulfilling its mission as a government towards the people." Mr. Fletcher chose to confine himself to facts and avoid opinion. Most of those who read his testimony will conclude that there is no justification for a campaign of hatred and distrust directed against the Carranza government.

IN response to a request from Congress the Department of Labor has submitted a report on the Mooney case. This report is the result of a secret investigation made by Mr. John B. Densmore, now Director of the Federal Employment Service, under orders from Secretary Wilson. Mr. Densmore worked without the knowledge of the San Francisco authorities, and gathered much of his evidence by means of a dictaphone placed in the office of District Attorney Fickert, who prosecuted the case. His conclusions are these: that the prosecution was conducted without a real investigation of the crime; that the prosecutor's case was "a patchwork of incongruous makeshift and often of desperate expediency; and that there are "excellent grounds for believing" that Mr. Fickert was influenced by local corporate interests, bitterly opposed to union labor, who were willing to use the bomb outrage of 1916 as a means of discrediting the unions—even if their frame-up sent an innocent man to his death.

TO take any action in the Mooney case, other than to make recommendations to the authorities in California, is beyond the power of the federal government. But in view of the report which has now been laid before Congress the case for a new trial is indisputable. Mooney's personal freedom is only one issue, though a sufficient one. In addition there is the importance of the case in its effect on industrial conditions throughout the country. Two days before the Densmore report was sent to Congress the Minnesota Federation of Labor voted for a five-day general strike to begin on September first, as protest against the conviction. In all parts of the country a labor situation, none too healthy in itself, is being poisoned by the suspicion that Mooney's trial was less an attempt to see justice done than to strike a blow at the forces of union labor.

ELSEWHERE in this issue is discussed the Kenyon-Anderson bill which aims at a reorganization of the packing industry. To befriend this measure in the stormy course it is certain to have in Congress a National Marketing Committee has been organized, with Mr. William Kent of the Tariff Commission as President. Propaganda will be launched for local warehouses and cooperative centres of distribution. In the committee are already represented various trade unions, farmers' leagues and associations of consumers. There was never a brighter moment for the campaign that is planned. In every city of the country there is protest against the high range of food prices. None of this protest will be effective unless it is organized.

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